

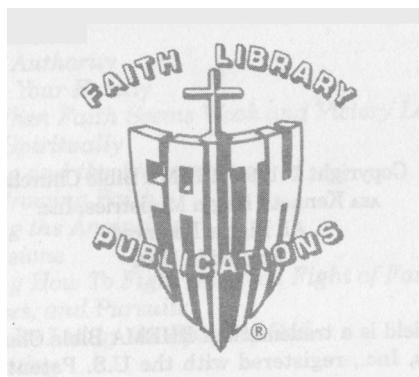
IT'S
YOUR
MOVE!



KENNETH HAGIN JR.

It's Your Move!

Kenneth Hagin Jr.



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In the U.S. Write:
Kenneth Hagin Ministries
P. O. Box 50126
Tulsa, OK 74150-0126

In Canada write:
Kenneth Hagin Ministries
P. O. Box 335
Etobicoke (Toronto), Ontario
Canada, M9A 4X3

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Chapter 1 ***Receive It!***

... as many as RECEIVED him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

—John 1:12

For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst RECEIVE IT, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

—1 Corinthians 4:7

Imagine hearing a knock at your door. You peek through the curtains from a nearby window and see the mailman standing there with a big package in his arms. You open the door to find that the package is addressed to you; it's a gift from a friend! The mailman asks you to sign for the package on a piece of paper marked "Received" and leaves as you stand there holding your gift. It's yours! All you had to do was *receive it*.

There is a key to receiving God's blessings in your life. For example, I want you to notice the little phrase in First Corinthians 4:7: "*Receive it.*" Both Scriptures in our text place a lot of emphasis on *receiving*. John 1:12 says, "... as many as RECEIVED HIM, to them gave he power to become the sons of God...." Christians need to learn about the receiving end of obtaining the blessings of God.

In the area of salvation, a lot of people say, "If you'll do this, and if you'll quit that, and if you'll give up this, then

the Lord will save you."

Have any of you ever heard that? It couldn't be further from the truth!

We don't give up anything to get what belongs to us from Christ. Receiving from God is not subtracting; it's adding!

People have said, "Do this, that, and the other. Give up this, straighten out this, and you'll get healed." Or "Do this, this, and this, and the Lord will meet your needs."

Not any of that is true, except that the Lord *will* save you, the Lord *will* heal you, and the Lord *will* meet your needs!

The gospel is the *good* news! It is not *subtraction*; it is *addition*. We don't *give up* things to become Christians. And we don't *give up* things to receive healing. We just take it! We *receive* what has already been given to us!

I had the privilege of growing up in a minister's home. I was born one Sunday morning and brought to church the next Sunday. I've been around church all of my more than fifty years of living. And I've seen some things throughout the years that have hindered people from receiving from God.

For example, the husband of one of the women in a certain church once said to the pastor, "I've just decided that I can never be a Christian. My wife keeps telling me that I've got to quit doing this, that, and the other thing before the Lord will save me. She may not know it, but I've tried to quit those things, and I just can't."

Just Come To God and Receive

A wise pastor will tell a person in a situation like that, "Don't worry about all that. You don't have to *give up* anything to get saved. You get saved by *accepting* Jesus Christ as your Savior. Just come and receive!"

I want you to notice that John 1:12 says, *"But as many as RECEIVED HIM, to them gave he POWER to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."*

You cannot live for God in your own strength. But after you receive *Jesus*, *He* gives you the power to overcome evil. *He* gives you the power to overcome temptation. *He* gives you the power to overcome everything the devil will try to bring to you.

It's not *giving up* things and trying to be a better person that's going to save you. It's receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and then living in the power that *He* gives you!

You can't give up a life of sin until you've accepted the Savior. You can't give up your sickness until you've accepted the Healer. You can't give up your poverty and want in the material area until you have accepted the Provider. And it's done by the simplest of actions: *Receive*. Simply receive Him!

A lot of people will say, "Well, confess your sins and God will save you." But you couldn't confess all your sins. You couldn't remember all of them.

No, we're not told to confess all our sins to get saved. We're told to repent, receive Jesus, and quit sinning.

Instead of *trying to get* something in our own strength, we need to simply *receive* something—the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Yet some people will still say, "Well, if I can just get enough people praying, maybe God will save me." Or Christians who need something from God will say, "If enough people pray, maybe I'll get the answer."

But, no, they won't. Enough people praying is not going to bring the answer to them. They must make up their minds that they are going to *receive it!*

So many times we pray about something and still get no

results. Certainly we need to pray, but we've got to have *faith* in order to receive. I thank God for prayer.

Often when you're preaching or teaching on a certain subject and you zero in on one particular area, it may seem as though you're minimizing other areas. But I'm not minimizing *praying*. I'm only emphasizing *receiving* right now.

You've got to have both of them working together—praying and receiving. However, you don't have to keep praying to God for something that already belongs to you. You can just *receive it!*

For example, if I said to someone that I was going to give him some money, what would he have to do to receive it? He'd have to reach out and take the money.

When would he receive it? Right *then*, because it's his—I gave it to him! He wouldn't have to stand there and beg me to give him the money. No! The money already belongs to him because I told him I'd give it to him. Then what does he have to do? Just receive it and go spend it!

If I gave someone five dollars, and he took it and put the money in his pocket, he wouldn't come to me later, shake my hand, and say, "Oh, Reverend Hagin. Please, can I spend that five dollars? I have the money in my pocket, but can I have it? Can I use it?"

If he did that, everybody who heard him would think he was crazy!

But did you know you can treat God the same way? In other words, God has already handed you blessings in His Word. He has already given them to you. They're in your pocket, so to speak. All you've got to do is use them!

God Is Waiting on You!

How many of you have ever played a game of checkers, chess, or another kind of board game? Has anyone ever

looked at you and said, "Okay, it's your move"?

Well, I'm going to tell you something, friend. When it comes to receiving from God according to His Word, *it's your move!*

God has already moved. Now it's your move! What you receive from God depends on you!

Say this out loud: "What I receive from God depends on *me! It's my move!*"

That should excite us! So many times we're sitting around waiting for God to move, and that's wrong.

I asked somebody once, "What are you doing?"

"Well, I'm waiting on God."

I said, "No, you aren't. You just *think* you are, but *God* is waiting on *you*. He's waiting for you to make a move. When you make a move, He will respond!"

By way of illustration, suppose you and I were playing a game of checkers. I move a checker; then you move. I move again; then you move. Then I move, and you move. We'd keep moving in turn like that until the game is over.

With God, if *you* keep moving, *He'll* keep moving, and you'll *always* be a winner! In other words, as long as you keep moving with God, you can't lose. But when you quit moving—that's when you start losing.

First Corinthians 4:7 says, "... *what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* ..." The way to enjoy the blessings that God has provided for you is simply to *receive* them. It doesn't matter where you were born or what your status is in life, God created you to enjoy His blessings.

You can't do anything about where you were born—whether you were born with "a silver spoon in your mouth" or maybe down in the ghetto.

Have you ever noticed that when kids are young, they

don't realize whether they're rich or poor. They're just kids having a good time. But when they begin to reach a certain age, they may begin to realize, *Hey, those people over there have more than we have.*

But even that can't keep them from receiving *God's* best blessings. God's blessings are bestowed freely on anyone who will receive them.

In many cities in the United States there is usually some sort of intersection, street, or block that separates rich and poor neighborhoods.

For example, we visited a large city once, and as we were driving down a particular street, we reached a certain block and saw a really nice place that was all fixed up. But then in the middle of that block, the neighborhood looked like a war zone!

In Christ, you can "cross the street" over into the blessings God has for you spiritually, physically, materially, and in every area of life. Don't misunderstand me. Certainly, spirituality is not measured by material wealth or your status in life.

But as a believer—no matter what your situation or circumstance—you can move from a position of defeat to a position of victory according to God's Word. However, in order to do that, you'll have to make a move toward God to *receive* those blessings and benefits.

By way of illustration, suppose someone was standing on the side of that street that looked like a war zone. Then suppose there was another guy standing on the other side, and he said, "All you have to do is come on over here to my side of the street. I'm going to give you a new house. I'm going to give you a job and a car. I want to help you. Everything's going to be all right."

You would think the person on the "war zone" side would be crazy not to make a move! What if he said to the

rich guy, "Oh, no. That's all right. I'll just stay over here where I am. I've got a little bit of bread and water. That's all I need." But the other fellow was offering him a steak!

You Can Have God's Best!

You'd think the poor guy was crazy for refusing such an offer! And yet each day, God offers us every benefit spiritually, physically, financially, materially, and emotionally. But many times we say in effect, "Well, I believe I'll go back where I was and settle for less than God's best." But you'll never know and experience the blessings of God until you make a move toward God. *It's your move!*

I heard an illustration once about a guy who told another man, "You be here tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock at the corner of Such-and-such Streets, and I'm going to give you the keys to a brand-new car."

A third fellow said to the man who was offered the car, "That couldn't be so. You know nobody is going to give you a new car."

The man replied, "I don't know, but I sure can't lose anything by going."

Now I want to ask you a question: Would *you* be there at that street corner? What if your family, all your friends, and even your fellow church members said, "Aw, you know that couldn't happen. That same guy promised something to Uncle So-and-so and never gave him anything"?

What would you do? Would you go down to that street corner at three in the afternoon? Even if the guy doesn't come through, you don't have anything to lose except a little bit of your time. But if he does come through, you've got a new car to gain! And you can drive that new car back and show it to those people who told you it wouldn't happen.

Friend, the Lord has promised us blessings in His Word. He has them for us. All we need to do is take the keys, so to speak, get in the car, and drive! Then we can "drive back" with the blessings and show that God is still God and that He always will be God!

Receive it! Receive whatever it is that you need or want from God's Word. That's all there is to it. How hard is it to receive? It's very simple and easy, but we have made it difficult.

When I say "we," I'm talking about the Church. For example, when you talk to some Christians about the promises of God, you find out that they don't understand how to receive from God in simple faith. But the Word makes it clear not only what the promises are, but how to receive those promises.

We have already discussed what God's Word says about salvation.

JOHN 1:12

12 But as many as RECEIVED HIM, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

JOHN 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH IN HIM should not perish, but have everlasting life.

But the Word also says something about healing. It says that by Jesus' stripes you were healed (1 Peter 2:24). That's what *God* said in His Word! Yet when you talk about some of these blessings, including getting your needs met, some theologians have made it difficult by saying, "It can't really be that simple. There's got to be more to it than that."

Others say things like, "You've got to go to church every day in order to earn God's blessing," or "You've got to do this, that, and the other thing to receive from God." But, no, as I said, you don't have to do any of that in order

to receive from God.

Now don't misunderstand me. You *should* go to church. But what I'm saying to you is, just *receive* what God has for you. It is simply this: "Lord, I receive!" And then act like it's so!

"Well, yes," somebody said, "but there are still some crosses we have to bear. If you haven't borne any crosses, how do you expect to get anything from God? After all, there will be some trials and tribulations. The Bible says so."

But God is still God even though there are trials and tribulations! And because God is still God, I am still receiving the victory! I don't care if I'm in the midst of the biggest trial there is—*I've got victory*—because the story isn't over! We still haven't written the last two words at the end of the story: *The End!*

In other words, when you get to the end of a test or trial, if you're believing God, there's victory! Now you may have to cross a few rivers and jump a few obstacles. But if you will keep receiving, God will keep giving. *It's your move!*

Chapter 2

Keep On Moving With God

Some Christians start out believing God. Then they get in the middle of a trial and say, "I thought God was going to come through for me, but I guess He's not."

When believers do that, they've just quit receiving—they've quit moving with God. When they quit moving, God quits moving.

It's not that God wanted to, but He *couldn't* move like He wanted to until they started moving again in obedience to His Word. In other words, they stopped moving—they started saying the wrong things—and they got over in the arena of worry and doubt.

They say, "Well, I *thought* God was going to ... blah, blah, blah...." Actually, that's about all words like that amount to—a bunch of blah. Blah *nothing*!

It's like listening to some songs and then realizing the words don't mean anything! For example, I grew up in the '50s, when quite often, backup singers would just sing words that didn't mean a thing!

A lot of believers do the same thing spiritually. They start believing God. Then all of a sudden, instead of speaking and moving in line with God's Word the way they are supposed to, they start speaking doubt and unbelief. Because their words have nothing that God can work with, He is hindered from moving on their behalf.

It's your move! What are you going to do?

Somebody said, "Well, I *am* doing something." Yes,

you may be doing something, but is it the *right* something? You're making the wrong move if you're speaking doubt and unbelief. And when you make the wrong move, God *can't* move. You've got to make the right move—that is, you've got to believe God and say what His Word says about your situation.

You Can't *Earn* God's Blessings—They Have To Be *Received*

You can't speak doubt and unbelief and expect to receive from God. And you can't earn the blessings of God through *works*. You've got to receive by *faith* what God has already promised you.

Many people are in the classification of the "do" Christians. They say, "Now if I do enough good works, I will earn God's blessings." In other words, they base their ability to receive from God on what they can do—on their own works.

You see, a lot of people get into *do, do, do* and *don't, don't, don't* until that's all they see. They forget about the simplicity of receiving from God based on what He has already done for them. They believe if they can get in enough "do's and don'ts," that will determine if they measure up and if God can help them.

Some of you have been in that same kind of bondage. You know what I'm talking about.

I didn't say a person could just live any way he wants to live and still receive God's blessings. I'm talking about the mentality of living by "do's and don'ts" in order to get things from God. That is *not* the way you receive from God!

Of course, you've got to live right and in line with God's Word. But the way you *receive* from God is to simply take His blessing by faith! Just *receive* it!

I've seen in the Word of God that some people got healed simply by *taking* their healing. If you'll check it out, they weren't following all the "do's and don'ts," yet they received anyway. You see, it's by *faith* that we receive the blessings of God, not by *works*.

I talked about the "do" Christians. Now I want to talk about another group. I like this group. They are what I call the "done" group, and I'm going to get in with *them!* You can get in with the "do's and don'ts" group if you want to, but I'm going to get in with the "done" group—d-o-n-e—*done!* That means that I am trusting in what Christ has already *done!*

Christ has already done it! He has already paid the price for everything we need in life. We don't have to pay the price all over again, because it is finished (John 19:30)! All we have to do is accept what He has done and keep moving on with God.

Jesus Christ arose victorious over death, hell, and the grave! I'm talking about what He *has done!* He arose victorious over all the power of the enemy.

Jesus has it all—all *power*. And He said to those who are His Church, the Body of the Lord Jesus Christ: "*I give you the power of attorney to use My Name*" (Matt. 18:18-20; Mark 16:17).

Jesus has already done it! He did all the work of redemption by going to the Cross! That's why I'm going to get on the *done* side! And if I walk on the *done* side, accepting what Jesus Christ has already *done* for me, I don't have to worry about the "do's and don'ts."

For example, if I live in line with the love of God that's already been shed abroad in my heart, I'll do the right things; I won't do the wrong things.

That's good news! And what I like best about this good news is that it's free! You may be destitute and down and

out! But if you'll accept God and His Word and the free Gift of Jesus Christ that He offers, that can change.

God's Word Can Change Things

I have been overseas many times where I have seen people get born again and transformed by the power of God. Then I've gone back a few years later, and I've seen that they have changed not only on the inside—in the inward man—but also on the outside. They not only learned how to walk in divine health, but their financial circumstances also improved.

I've also witnessed people who have come into our local church and gotten born again. Then as they begin to live in line with the Word, I've seen them begin to change too. That's why I like the chorus that says, "Something on the inside, working on the outside...."

When you get the Word on the inside—in your heart—it's going to show up on the outside! When you get on the inside all the benefits that God's Word says belong to you, they will start showing up in your life on the outside (1 Tim. 4:15).

By way of illustration, one of my church members who attended RHEMA Bible Training Center moved his family prematurely to go out-of-state to minister. Later, he realized he'd missed God, so he brought his family back to Tulsa and to RHEMA Bible Church. He said it this way: "I missed it, but I came back home."

When this man came back, he hardly had anything and was barely making it financially. He had an old car, and after a while, he had no car at all.

I prayed and talked with him, and soon he received an offer for a job locally. He took that job, and as time went on, many other offers came along. But he knew that wasn't what God wanted him to do. So I kept encouraging him,

"Just stay with what God told you to do." He stayed put because that was where God wanted him, and just recently, there was a write-up in a local periodical that said he was a prominent man in this city!

Just a few years ago this man didn't have anything! But God blessed him and his family. Why? Because they learned the benefits of moving with God when God said to move. As a result, God moved on this man's behalf and prospered him in every area of his life.

We've got people like that all over our congregation. I can see where they've come from and where they are now. It's not because our pastoral staff is so smart or super-spiritual. It's because the people found out what God's Word says and they started moving in line with God's Word. Then God produced the results spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, materially, and in every area of their lives.

What do *you* want from God? It's your move. Freely it's been given, so freely receive it!

Move With God and Receive the Benefits

What exactly does it mean to move with God and receive His blessings and benefits? The words translated "receive" mean *to take, grasp, embrace, seize, or catch, as one would capture a prize*. Those are just a few definitions of "receive."

As I said, if I were to give someone some money, he would simply have to reach out and take it in order to receive it. But notice he couldn't just reach out with two fingers and barely take hold of it. No, he'd have to grasp, embrace, or seize it and take hold of it.

That's the reason some people are losing out with God and not receiving His blessings. They're just barely reaching out and barely getting hold of them.

But, friend, you can open your hand wide, reach out, and grab hold of the blessings of God! And once you've grabbed hold of the blessings, just grit your teeth, so to speak, and hold on to it. When you do that, the devil can't hold on to your blessings or prevail against you no matter how hard he tries.

As I said, many people are just barely taking hold of the blessings of God, and the devil is ripping the blessings loose and stealing them every time.

But reach up and grab hold of the blessings you desire from God's Word. Grit your teeth and say, "Devil, it belongs to me. You're not going to take the blessings away from me! They're *mine*; I have them now. I *receive them!*"

Friend, it's up to you to keep on moving with God to receive the blessings of God for your life. God is *for* you; He's not against you. And He's always ready to bless you and meet your every need. But God is waiting for *you!* So rise to the occasion and receive whatever it is you need from God! It's your move!

Chapter 3

Move Out of Defeat to Appropriate Your Victory

There is an Old Testament illustration that shows what it means to move with God and appropriate the blessings and benefits He has already provided. Notice that this passage talks about Jonathan and the victory he won for the children of Israel.

1 SAMUEL 14:1,2,4,6,8-17,20,23

1Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and LET US GO OVER to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father.

2And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men....

4 And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side....

6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and LET US GO OVER unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that THE LORD WILL WORK FOR US: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few....

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, WE WILL PASS OVER unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then WE WILL GO UP: FOR THE LORD HATH DELIVERED THEM INTO OUR HAND: and this shall be a sign unto us.

11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves.

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armourbearer, COME UP AFTER ME: FOR THE LORD HATH DELIVERED THEM INTO THE HAND OF ISRAEL.

13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.

15 And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another.

17 Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armourbearer were not there....

20 And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture....

23 So THE LORD SAVED ISRAEL THAT DAY....

This setting in First Samuel 14 talks about what to do when you need a victory.

Have you ever experienced times when it seemed as though all you were experiencing was defeat? Perhaps it seemed like everywhere you turned, you were defeated? Well, God has made a way for you to move out of defeat to appropriate your victory. But you've got to do the moving. In other words, it's your move!

In reading First Samuel 13 and 14, we find that Jonathan's father, Saul, was sitting under a pomegranate tree in Migron with a defeatist attitude. He had 600 men with him who didn't have any weapons, but the Philistines were in their garrison with about 30,000 chariots, 6,000 cavalry, and all kinds of infantrymen!

The Philistines had sent raiding parties that destroyed all the blacksmiths' shops and killed the blacksmiths, leaving Israel weaponless. Only Saul and his son Jonathan had weapons, and Israel only had 600 men of their original fighting force of 3,000. The rest of them had run off to hide. Saul and his army had been beaten down, and Philistine raiding parties kept coming into the villages and cities, doing whatever they desired to do.

The children of Israel were God's people. We as Christians are God's children today. The Philistines were a type of Satan and his cohorts because Israel—God's people—always had trouble with the Philistines. And today we as Christians—God's people—always have trouble with Satan. Satan is always trying to raid us—to come into our camp and destroy us. He wants to take us out of the place of God's blessing.

Saul and the children of Israel were in a bad situation. And it seems that only two men, Jonathan and his armorbearer, had escaped Israel's defeatist attitude. The Israelites were just sitting around with the attitude, *There's nothing we can do, so we'll just sit here while the enemy takes advantage of us.*

That's what a lot of people do when they get that far down spiritually and emotionally. They just sit there while the enemy takes advantage of them.

But Jonathan and his armorbearer had escaped that attitude of defeat. In light of a seemingly hopeless situation, Jonathan realized that something must be done to appropriate victory.

In much the same way, sometimes people need to get up and do something about their situation. Some people in bad situations just sit there with the attitude, *Whatever happens, happens*, and they get thrown from pillar to post because they never rise up to even try to do anything.

Take Bold Action and Exercise Confident Faith

If you're going to rise above your situation and appropriate victory out of defeat, you're going to have to take bold action. That means you're going to have to get up and do something!

Jonathan got up and did something. And in the same way, you need to rise up in your situation, realizing that God and His Word are with you and that you do not have to be defeated. You don't need to have a defeatist attitude. With God, you can do something about your situation.

Somebody said, "Yes, but I'm praying for God to do something about my situation." Then you're wasting your time, because God has already done all He's ever going to do about your situation. Through Christ, He's already defeated the enemy for you. Now you just need to take a stand against the devil in the Name of Jesus.

God has already made a way of escape for you (1 Cor. 10:13). He has told you about it in His Word, and now it is up to you to take bold action in the face of the enemy who's trying to tear you apart!

If you are going to rise up out of defeat and appropriate your victory, you are going to have to exercise confident faith. Unless you have confidence in God and His Word, all your faith confessions are not going to do you any good.

That means that when you make a faith confession, believe it! Some people are always saying things, but they're not confident. In other words, they have no confidence in what they're saying at all. Therefore, nobody

pays any attention to them.

Have you ever noticed that many times you can tell a dog, "Sit," and he doesn't pay any attention to you?

But with confidence in your voice, you can command him, "Sit!" and he'll obey. There's a big difference. The second time, you had an authoritative confidence that when you spoke, something was going to happen!

Sometimes you can very quietly and calmly tell the devil to get out of your way, and he just keeps right on harassing you. But when you use your authority with confidence, the devil will flee (James 4:7). You see, the devil knows your authority, but as long as you have no confidence in your authority, he pays no attention to you.

Sometimes when Christians face the enemy, they're shaky in their faith. They don't really have any confidence that standing against the devil is going to work. But as we read in First Samuel 14, Jonathan had confidence in God, so as far as he was concerned the odds against him were irrelevant.

What were Jonathan's odds? What were the odds of two men winning against 30,000 chariots, 6,000 cavalry, and innumerable infantrymen or foot soldiers? I would consider his odds to be zero!

In other words, in the natural, Jonathan had no chance of winning against such a vast army. But, you see, Jonathan's confidence was not in his fighting ability or in his armorbearer's ability. Although Jonathan knew he could fight well, his confidence was not based on his ability, but on the Lord God Jehovah.

Some people have accused Christians who believe God's Word of being conceited and full of pride because their confidence is in God. But, you see, it's not pride in ourselves; it's confidence in God and His Word.

Your Confidence in God Will Set You Apart and Make You a Winner

What makes a Christian so optimistic in the face of seemingly sure defeat? It's his confidence and faith in God. When you have confidence, you are optimistic about what's going to happen. But when you don't have confidence, you are pessimistic about what's going to happen.

You can tell whether or not a person has any confidence by listening to what he says. If he says things like, "Well, the enemy's coming. You can't ever tell what might happen now," then that person has no confidence in God and His Word.

But I can tell you what's going to happen! In any situation, whatever you say in faith according to God's Word is what's going to happen! A person who says, "You can't tell what might happen! You'd better be careful being so overconfident," is in for a great defeat. On the other hand, he'll win if he believes and says, "We're going to win! We're going to come out victorious because of what God's Word says!"

Sometimes when Christians face the enemy, they allow themselves to become so disillusioned that they collapse in a heap of self pity. They say, "Oh, God, why did this happen to me? Oh, Lord, I thought I was doing what You wanted me to do, but look at the mess I'm in."

They've been hit so hard on every side that they just collapse under the pressure. That's when they need the help of others, and that's not wrong. Sometimes we need one another to help us step out of the defeat we're in so we can appropriate our victory.

Some Christians try to become so self-sufficient and independent. But the Word of God talks about bearing one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2). There are times when you need somebody to help you bear the burden.

Certainly, there is such a thing as being strong in the Lord for yourself, but there is also such a thing as bearing one another's burdens. As I said, there will be times when you're going to need somebody to help you bear your burden, and there will be times when you will have to help someone else bear his.

How many of you know how to believe God, but you've found yourself in certain situations where it was the help of a fine fellow Christian that helped you win the victory?

You see, so many times people want to be so faith-independent that they will not even share their problems with others. But how can others help them move out of defeat to appropriate their victory if they won't share their problem with others because they're trying to be macho "faith" people?

Never Give Up the Fight of Faith

Some people in a test or trial won't do anything to help themselves. They won't ask for help from a fellow believer to help them move out of the defeat they're in.

But just like Jonathan and his armorbearer, sometimes you've got to take a step and do something in faith. Then God will meet you where you are and bring you into victory.

For example, one of the best antidotes for depression is to get up and do something. Get cleaned up and dressed up. You'll start feeling better if you'll just do that. Then change what you've been doing that got you into depression in the first place. Begin to read the Bible and listen to good Christian music. Begin to take action against depression. The longer you just sit around thinking about your problem, the more in despair you are going to get. So get up and do something!

That's what Saul's son, Jonathan, did. King Saul and the

rest of his fighting men were just sitting around with their heads hung down in defeat. But Jonathan in effect said, "Hey, wait a minute! I'm going to do something about this." He did, and God helped him win a mighty victory.

You see, by doing nothing, the Israelites were in a position of certain defeat. The enemy was going to take them captive anyway, so why should they sit there and wait till the Philistines came? If you'll read the account, the Philistines were just sending in small raiding parties when actually they could have taken the Israelites any time they wanted to. But the Philistines were just playing games with Israel.

Have you ever seen a cat catch a mouse? Have you ever seen that cat just play around with the mouse? I've seen a cat just sit there and let that mouse start to run like it's going to get away. Then the cat would just reach out with his paw and slap the mouse back toward him. The cat was playing games with the mouse.

Some of you are letting the enemy, Satan, do that to you right now. He's playing games with you, slapping you around. Just when you think you're going to get away from his harassment, the next thing you know, you get slapped down again.

That was happening with the children of Israel. And Jonathan said, "Hey, wait a minute! Why just sit here and die? If I'm going to die, I'm going to die with my sword in my hand doing something about this situation! It's my move!"

With the help of God, Jonathan won his victory. And you can win a victory, too, if you'll take a step of faith toward God.

Chapter 4

Position Yourself to Win

The attitude Jonathan portrayed in First Samuel 14 is the attitude some of you need to get hold of. Get up and do something with the authority God has given you in His Word. Get with it! And I'll tell you what! When you get up and get into action, you'll open the channels for God to begin to move.

That's what happened when Jonathan advanced toward the enemy with faith in God. God moved and gave Israel the victory. But as long as the Israelites were sitting down with tears running down their cheeks and their chins slumped to their chests, crying, "It's no use! We're going to die!" then God had nothing to work with!

The same thing is true in your Christian walk today In First Corinthians 10:11, the Apostle Paul said that what happened to the children of Israel happened as examples for us.

You see, the Israelites' possession of the Promised Land was a type of our Christian walk and our possession of what belongs to us in Christ. The Israelites had to continually fight to keep what was theirs because the enemy kept coming in and trying to take it from them.

The same thing happens to you spiritually. Your enemy, the devil, will try to take from you the blessings God has for you.

Just like King Saul, you can sit down under the pomegranate tree and say, "Oh, Lord, please deliver me."

But you will be praying a prayer that is unanswerable, because God has already delivered you. Or you can say, "Lord, I'm in a tough situation. The enemy has me hemmed in on every side, but I'm going to rise up with confidence in You, believing that Your Word is going to set me free!"

In order to move out of defeat to appropriate victory, you're going to have to take bold action and exercise confident faith. However, you can't exercise confident faith until you know God's will.

You Must Know God's Will—His Word

It doesn't matter how bold your action or how confident you seem, if you don't know what the will of God is, you're still in a mess. So get in the Word and find out what the will of God is. Ask God to reveal which way you should go and what you need to do.

God has said certain things in His Word, so you know that's His will. But sometimes you don't know exactly how you're going to take the victory—how you're going to move out of defeat to appropriate the victory He has given you.

1 SAMUEL 14:8-10

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us.

Jonathan said to his armorbearer, "If the Philistines tell us to come to them, we're going to go up and fight and win because we know that's what God wants us to do. But if they tell us to stay where we are, then we'll know that God wants us to go another way."

You see, when the specific will of God is not revealed,

we need to find out what the specific will of God is. Jonathan realized that it wasn't God's will for God's children to sit there and be defeated by the enemy. So he got up and did something about it. However, at the time Jonathan proceeded to do something about it, he didn't know specifically which way God wanted him to go because that part hadn't been revealed to him.

We as Christians have a whole lot more revealed to us than Jonathan had revealed to him. We're under the New Covenant, which is a better covenant established upon better promises.

Jonathan didn't know which way to go, but he found out, and he established what God wanted to do. After he took bold action and exercised confident faith because he knew what the will of God was, Jonathan made his move to appropriate the victory.

Step Out in Faith and Take Your Blessing!

Now what does the word "appropriate" mean? It simply means *to take!* Notice how Jonathan moved out to take his victory.

1 SAMUEL 14:13,14

13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and they [the Philistines] fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.

Two men, Jonathan and his armorbearer, went up to the Philistine garrison and killed twenty men from the enemy camp right there on a half acre of ground.

When you take action to defeat the enemy, things begin to happen in a hurry! But when you take action, you've got

to follow up the blow, so to speak. You can't just stand back and wait.

If you've ever watched boxing or have ever done any boxing, you know that if you strike a blow to the enemy, and he's hurt, that's when you should immediately attack. Don't back off and allow him to collect his senses.

I've watched boxing matches in which an opponent backed off for just a second. Then the other guy got his head cleared, came back, and won the fight. All the first guy had to do was follow up on his advantage and strike a final blow to his opponent, but he didn't.

That's what Jonathan did. He followed up on his advantage. When he and his armorbearer killed twenty of the Philistine army, confusion set in the enemy's camp.

1 SAMUEL 14:15,16

15 And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another.

Two Hebrews were in the middle of the Philistine garrison! Nobody knew where they came from because they'd killed those twenty Philistine men who'd called them to come up to the gate. So nobody in the Philistine camp knew how many Israelites were in their camp. All they saw were twenty men lying dead on the ground. The two Hebrews were swinging swords, and the Philistines got confused and began fighting among themselves.

Some Hebrews had already been taken prisoner by the Philistines, and they began to turn on the Philistines too! There were also some Israelite traitors in the Philistine camp, and they, too, turned and started fighting alongside the other Hebrews (1 Sam. 14:21,22). It ended up a great

victory for Israel, but it all started out with two men who were willing to do something instead of just sitting down in defeat!

When Saul and the Israelite army heard sounds coming from the camp at Michmash, they began to realize that it was not the sound of the enemy attacking the Israelites—it was the sound of the enemy being defeated!

The rest of the Israelites marshaled their forces, took off down the road to the Philistine camp, and got in on the tail end of the fight until the battle was won. But the battle was really won by two people who were willing to step out and do something.

If you haven't found it out already, you need to know that you're going to fight battles in your Christian life. In other words, if you're going to claim ground for God, the sole of your foot has to tread on it! And in order to stake your claim, many times you've got to do what the children of Israel did. You've got to drive the enemy off your territory. You've got to kick the enemy out.

So instead of allowing the enemy to set up camp at Michmash while you stay down at Migron under the pomegranate tree, get up and do something! Get up and move right in to the middle of the camp with the Word of God and start kicking the enemy out!

What's Your Obstacle? Define It and Conquer It!

Before you can move out of defeat and appropriate your victory, you've got to understand and zero in on what it is that's defeating you—a harmful habit, a recurring temptation, sickness, disease, or perhaps even feelings that you're being victimized because you're unemployed.

Maybe you have an inadequate education that's caused you to sit down and just accept life as it comes by. Maybe you've lacked opportunities in life.

But you're not helpless if you'll follow God's plan to get you to the place of victory.

You can overcome and triumph over any handicap. You can defeat any enemy that comes against you. So what if you haven't had the opportunity to get a good education! You can still come through in victory!

Somebody once told me, "Well, if I just had an education, I could get a better job."

I'd heard him complain about that very thing before, so finally, I just stopped him, looked him straight in the eye, and said, "Have you ever heard of night school? There's a community college right down the street, and they offer instruction that will help you. If you don't have a high-school education, they offer instruction to help you get your GED. They also offer college classes that you can take at night to better yourself."

You see, you can sit around and cry and complain in life, and the devil will take advantage of that. Or you can get up, do something about your situation, and come out victorious. But if you keep complaining, it will be you who's keeping yourself down, not anyone else.

It doesn't matter where you are or what your station is in life, don't complain about it. Do something about it. God has given you the ability, but it's up to you to take advantage of it.

Jonathan believed in God and in God's ability to help him. Sure, Jonathan could have sat there with his father and the rest of the men. He could have died there too. But Jonathan was willing to take bold action, exercise confident faith, and find the will of God so he could move out of defeat to appropriate victory. Not only did Jonathan win victory for himself, he won victory for the whole nation of Israel!

It's up to you to find out what you're going to do with

your life. It's up to you—it's your move!

In His Word, God has given you every opportunity for success. For example, Paul said in Philippians 4:13: "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

That's not just talking about spiritual things. I honestly believe that. I taught that to my children, and I teach it to anyone who will listen. I honestly believe that there's not a Christian anywhere who can't succeed in life and do all things through Christ who strengthens him!

If you are in school, you can make good grades. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you! If you are up for a promotion on your job, you can advance and be successful in your job.

Don't ever say, "Well, I don't know whether I have the ability to handle that or not." If your employer offers you a promotion, you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you! Ask God for wisdom. He said that if you lack wisdom, ask Him for it, and He will give it to you without holding back (James 1:5).

A friend of mine went to work at a particular place after he got out of high school. A job promotion came up that called for a college degree. My friend's supervisor talked to the owner of the business and said, "I think this man can do the job, but he doesn't have a college education."

The owner said, "He's worked here long enough so that he understands what's going on, and he has a good mind. I think he can do the job."

They called my friend in and offered him the job. But then they tried to discourage him from taking it by telling him how much education he needed to do the job and how he didn't really meet the qualifications!

When they got finished talking, they asked my friend, "Well, what do you think?"

He looked at them and said, "I'll take it! I can do the job."

Somebody said, "Well, he was being egotistical." No, he wasn't. He just understood that he could read and study or take classes if he had to in order to successfully do the job. Secondly, he knew what the Bible said: *"I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me"* (Phil. 4:13). My friend also knew that God wanted him to get ahead in life!

Later the owner told my friend, "You've done this job better than anyone we've ever had do it." And my friend has been promoted several times since then. But according to the personnel manual, he wasn't qualified. Yet he's doing the job!

The Decision Is Yours

God can do the same for you. Your personnel manual may say one thing, and you may not have the qualifications for a particular job. But if you'll believe God and do something about it, He'll put you over. You can come out on top a winner. But, you see, it's up to you. It's your move!

I want to get you stirred up so you will do something in faith about your situation—so you can move out of defeat into victory.

There's no use just sitting down and taking it when the enemy is trying to keep you down and defeated. You can get up and make something out of yourself if you want to.

It's up to you to climb the wall that's standing in front of you, like Jonathan did. He scaled the cliff, conquered the enemy, and won the victory. You can do the same thing. Or you can just sit down, give up, and be defeated.

In order to enjoy success in life, you must take bold action, find out the will of God, exercise confident faith, and appropriate the victory. Are you willing to do that?

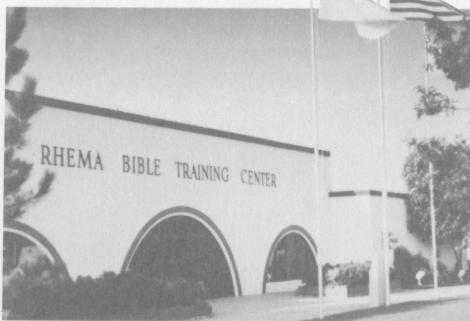
Sometimes I think we over-spiritualize some things. But we need to realize that we live in the natural realm, that God is interested in us right where we live, and that He wants us to get ahead in life.

Don't sit down or lie down in defeat when the enemy tries to take advantage of you! Get an attitude of victory instead of an attitude of defeat. Learn to take bold steps in faith in order to appropriate the victory that belongs to you in Christ. You'll never have the best or be the best you can be if you're willing to settle for mediocrity.

Say this out loud:

"I will succeed in life spiritually and naturally. I will come out on top. The enemy cannot defeat me. He cannot hem me in, because I will take bold action. I will find God's will by reading and studying His Word. I will exercise confident faith to appropriate the victory that belongs to me. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

God is for you, friend. He's not against you. As you take steps of faith toward appropriating the blessings that belong to you in Christ, God will meet you and give you the victory. He's always ready and willing to stand behind His Word and make it good in your life. It's your move!



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kenneth Hagin Jr., Executive Vice-President of Kenneth Hagin Ministries and Pastor of RHEMA Bible Church, writes from a rich and diversified background of more than thirty years in the ministry.

Rev. Hagin attended Southwestern Assemblies of God College and graduated from Oral Roberts University with a degree in religious education. He also holds an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Faith Theological Seminary in Tampa, Florida.

After serving as an associate pastor, Rev. Hagin traveled as an evangelist throughout the United States and abroad and was responsible for organizing RHEMA Bible Training Center, a school which equips men and women for the ministry.

In addition to his administrative and teaching responsibilities at RHEMA, Rev. Hagin is senior pastor of RHEMA Bible Church, a large and thriving congregation on the RHEMA campus. He is also International Director of RHEMA Ministerial Association International and has a weekly radio program, "RHEMA Radio Church," which is heard on stations throughout the United States.



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